

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 301709Z MAR 78
FM USMISSION USNATO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0392
SECDEF WASHDC
INFO ALL NATO CAPITALS
CINCLANT NORFOLK VA
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER
USNMR SHAPE BE
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 03273

SECSTATE FOR EUR/RPM; SECDEF FOR OASD/ISA.

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: NATO, MILI, AWACS
SUBJECT: NATO AEW

REF: (A) USNATO 3126 DTG 241825Z MAR 78; (B) BRUSSELS
5141 DTG 151819Z MAR 78 (NOTAL); (C) BONN 5290 DTG 221712Z
MAR 78.

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SUMMARY: AS REPORTED REF A, THE NAC HAS AGREED TO FORWARD
THE NATO AEW PACKAGE PROPOSAL TO CAPITALS FOR REVIEW
THROUGH NATIONAL PROCESSES WITH THE VIEW TOWARD A DECISION
ON THE PROGRAM BY DEFENSE MINISTERS IN MAY. WE SEE THE
NEED FOR A GREAT DEAL OF WORK BY THE US, AND POSSIBLY
OTHERS, TO INSURE THAT NATIONS ARE READY FOR DECISION IN
MAY, AND TO INSURE THAT THE DECISION WILL BE FAVORABLE.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN AGREEING TO SEND THE NATO AEW PACKAGE PROPOSAL TO
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CAPITALS FOR REVIEW THROUGH NATIONAL PROCESSES, SEVERAL
PERMREPS REINTERATED NATIONAL PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICI-
PATION IN THE PROGRAM WHILE OTHERS MADE IT CLEAR THAT
THEIR AGREEMENT COULD NOT IMPLY A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO
THE PROGRAM (REF A). IN ADDITION, WE HAVE READ WITH
INTEREST REPORTS FROM BRUSSELS AND BONN (REFS B AND C)
WHICH INDICATED THAT A POSITIVE DECISION BY NATO ON AEW

IN MAY IS FAR FROM ASSURED.

2. WE BELIEVE AN AFFIRMATIVE DECISION ON THIS IMPORTANT PROGRAM IS WITHIN REACH, BUT WE ALSO BELIEVE IT WILL NOT MATERIALIZE WITHOUT EXTRAORDINARY MEASURES BY THE US. THE FIRST OF THESE WOULD BE THE APPEAL BY SECRETARY BROWN SUGGESTED IN REF C. WITHOUT A STRONG GERMAN COMMITMENT TO A DECISION IN MAY, WE SEE LITTLE HOPE OF CONVINCING SOME OF THE NATIONS TO EXPEND THE EXTRA EFFORT NEEDED TO MAKE A FUNDING COMMITMENT IN MAY.

3. THE SECOND MEASURE WOULD INCLUDE HIGH LEVEL WASHINGTON DEMARCHES, PERHAPS BY SECRETARY BROWN, WITH SOME ALLIED GOVERNMENTS. THIS BEST COULD BE DONE IN COORDINATION WITH THE GERMANS, ASSUMING THEY CAN BE CONVINCED TO TAKE ON SUCH AN ACTIVIST POSTURE ON NATO AEW. WE SEE BELGIUM, WITH ITS LACK OF MOD FUNDS FOR AEW, AS THE FIRST TARGET FOR THESE APPROACHES. HOWEVER, WE WOULD NOT RECOMMEND THAT WASHINGTON ASSUME THAT ANY OF THE INVOLVED NATIONS ARE IN THE BAG. EACH, WITH THE POSSIBLE EXCEPTION OF LUXEMBOURG, HAS ITS OWN PROBLEMS WITH THE PROGRAM. THE NETHERLANDS STILL HAS NOT ACCEPTED THE GERMAN MAIN OPERATING BASE; DENMARK HAS MENTIONED THE NEED FOR SOME COMMON FUNDING OF ITS LOW LEVEL RADAR SYSTEM; PORTUGAL AND GREECE HAVE SOME PROBLEMS WITH THE PROPOSED COST SHARING SCHEMES; TURKEY IS NOT SATISFIED WITH PROVISIONS

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FOR OVERFLIGHT AND DATA EXCHANGE RIGHTS; CANADA IS PARTICULARLY CONCERNED OVER ITALY'S POSITION AND ABOUT INDUSTRIAL COLLABORATION; AND NORWAY MAY NEED ASSURANCES OVER THE QUESTION OF ESM AND CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS. FINALLY, WHILE ITALY'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS MAY PRECLUDE A MORE SUBSTANTIAL ITALIAN CONTRIBUTION BY MAY, WE BELIEVE ALL THE ALLIES SHOULD PRESSURE ITALY FOR AN EARLY COMMITMENT.

4. AT ANY RATE WE BELIEVE WASHINGTON MAY HAVE TO BE PREPARED TO MAKE SOME CONCESSIONS, OR TO CALL IN SOME OUTSTANDING IOUS, IN ORDER TO GAIN A NATO AEW PROCUREMENT DECISION IN MAY. WE REALIZE THIS MAY BE DIFFICULT TO DO, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE LONG TERM DEFENSE PROGRAM COMMITMENTS NATIONS ARE BEING ASKED TO MAKE THIS SPRING, BUT WITHOUT EXTRAORDINARY PRESSURE ON THE PART OF THE US, NATO AEW MAY BE DELAYED FURTHER. BENNETT

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